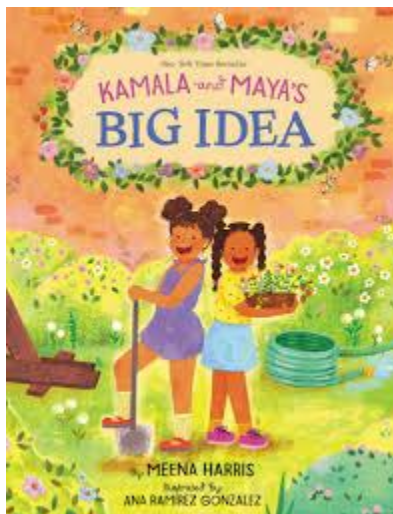


First Opinion: Positive Change

Harris, Meena. *Kamala and Maya's Big Idea*. Illustrated by Ana Ramirez Gonzalez. New York: Balzer+Bray, 2020. Print.



Denise Morrow

This story was based on a true story. The author's aunt and mother learned how to turn a situation around for the better. This story shows a lot of determination in reaching a goal. The characters decided it would be a great idea to make a playground in the empty courtyard outside their apartment. The girls contacted the landlord several times about their idea and several times the answer was "no." The girls did not give up on their dream. Finally, the landlord agreed. Building the playground was too expensive so the sisters would have to build it themselves. The sisters talked to several neighbors for help and the answer was "no." The sisters did not give up and finally "no" changed to "yes." Everyone helped and the playground was created from donations. The playground had everything but a slide. The kids began to think of ways to make money. They thought of a bake sale, sidewalk sale or a lemonade sale. The adults and kids all worked together and earned the money for the slide. The landlord thanked them for doing a good job.

I read the story to my second-grade students. They enjoyed the story. One student liked that everyone worked together to sell the lemonade and make the playground. One student stated,

“Teamwork makes the dream work.” My students loved the colorful pictures. Another student loved the hairstyles. My students were excited to learn that the author, Meena Harris, is the niece of Kamala Harris, our newly elected Vice President of the United States. They also enjoyed seeing pictures of the family.

The neighborhood represented all types of races working together to reach their goals. This story showed the power and brilliance of young people. My mom always told me that I could accomplish anything in life if I used my mind. The sisters came up with a dream and then they created their own letter to the landlord. They had a lot of determination and they brainstormed how they would accomplish their goals. They did not let negativity enter their thoughts. They positively came up with plans and solutions. The sisters helped to develop unity in their neighborhood. The end result was a beautiful playground for everyone to enjoy.

Works Cited

Harris, Meena. *Kamala and Maya's Big Idea*. Illustrated by Ana Ramirez Gonzalez. New York: Balzer+Bray, 2020. Print.

About the Author

Denise Morrow is a 2nd grade teacher at Matchbook Learning at IPS Wendell Philips #63 Indianapolis, Indiana. She is a graduate of Marian University. This is her last semester at Western Governors University where she will receive her Master's in Curriculum and Instruction. She is a member of St. Rita Catholic Church, where she serves on various committees. In her spare time, she enjoys, shopping, reading, and singing in the St. Rita Gospel Choir.